



Department of Human Resources  
311 West Saratoga Street  
Baltimore MD 21201

## FIA ACTION TRANSMITTAL

Control Number: #11-07

Effective Date: October 1, 2010

Issuance Date: October 4, 2010

**TO: DIRECTORS, LOCAL DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES  
DEPUTY/ASSISTANT DIRECTORS FOR FAMILY INVESTMENT  
ASSISTANT DIRECTORS FOR SERVICES  
FAMILY INVESTMENT SUPERVISORS AND ELIGIBILITY STAFF**

**FROM: KEVIN M. MCGUIRE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR** 

**RE: CATEGORICAL ELIGIBILITY FOR THE FOOD SUPPLEMENT  
PROGRAM**

**PROGRAM AFFECTED: FOOD SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM**

**ORIGINATING OFFICE: OFFICE OF PROGRAMS**

### SUMMARY

In an effort to simplify the Food Supplement Program (FSP) eligibility process, we are expanding categorical eligibility to most households with income at or below 200 percent of the poverty level. This policy will also make more households potentially eligible for FSP benefits because there will be no asset test. The only households that are not included in expanded categorical eligibility are those that are excluded by federal rules.

To make this change we are applying federal policy that allows us to use a non-cash Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funded program to confer broad based categorical eligibility to FSP households. TANF funds were used to print the brochure, Family Planning, A Guide for You. This meets the criteria for broad based categorical eligibility. With broad based categorical eligibility, there is no requirement that there be minor children in the household.

A supply of these brochures was sent to local departments for you to give to customers if they request one. Give the customer the Family Planning brochure when the customer requests a copy. There is no requirement to give it to everyone. A copy of the brochure is attached. It is also translated into Spanish.

We are adding the following information to applications that are used for FSP:

### Authorization to Receive Family Planning Information

If you want information, you can ask your case manager for a Family Planning Guide. You may also contact:

- 1-800-546-8900 if you need help in finding a provider for birth control or arranging prenatal care, or
- The Center for Maternal and Child Health at 410-767-6713  
[www.fha.state.md.us/mch](http://www.fha.state.md.us/mch)

### **REVIEW OF CURRENT AND ONGOING POLICY:**

- Categorical eligibility policy is in section 115 of the Food Supplement Program Manual.
- A household is not categorically eligible and is subject to all FSP eligibility and benefit provisions if:
  - Any member is disqualified for an intentional program violation (IPV) in accordance with Section 480.4 (Intentional Program Violation Disqualification Determination) of the FSP manual; or
  - The head of household is disqualified for failure to comply with the work requirements in accordance with Section 130.12 (Failure to Comply with Work Registration Requirements) of the FSP manual.
- Categorically eligible households are not subject to the gross and net income test and do not have to meet resource limits. This means we no longer verify vehicle or bank account ownership for the FSP.
- Categorical eligibility also extends to:
  - Individuals authorized to receive but who have not yet received a benefit;
  - Eligible TCA, SSI or PAA individuals whose benefits are suspended or recouped; or
  - Eligible TCA households that are not paid because the TCA grant is less than \$10.
- Eligibility factors that are accepted for FSP eligibility without the verification required in Section 408.3 because of categorical eligibility are:
  - Resources
  - Gross and net income limits
  - Sponsored immigrant information
  - Residency
  - Social security number information
- One and two person households that are categorically eligible are entitled to at least a \$16 per month allotment, even if the household's income is over scale.



Households larger than 2 persons are benefit ineligible if the income is over scale. CARES will deny or close categorically eligible cases that are benefit ineligible.

➤ FY 2011 200% of Monthly Federal Poverty Guidelines:

1	\$1806
2	2430
3	3052
4	3676
5	4300
6	4922
7	5546
8	6170

**PAYMENT ACCURACY**

Although this change simplifies policy and expands eligibility, it does not prevent Quality Control simplified reporting errors. Reporting errors can happen when a customer with income below 130 percent of the poverty level does not report when income goes over the 130 percent income limit. This policy did not change. It is important to review the change reporting requirement with customers at the time of application and redetermination. A copy of the change reporting guide is attached.

**CARES PROCEDURES:**

- Effective October 1, 2010, CARES is programmed to automatically determine the categorical eligibility of the household and the correct FSP benefit amount based on the household composition, household size, and income. Therefore, there is nothing new for case managers to enter during the interview and eligibility process.

Example: A single adult applies for benefits September 18. The customer has \$5,000 in a savings account. The case is approved October 5. CARES denies the case for September and approves the benefit for October.

- The **Cat Elig** field displays on the **FSFI** screen. This field displays a **C**, an **F**, or an **N**.
  1. **C** indicates the FSP household is categorically eligible due to the traditional reason of being the recipient of cash benefits.
  2. **F** indicates the FSP household is categorically eligible due to its meeting the definition of a "TANF Family" and the 200% gross income test.
  3. **N** indicates the FSP household is not considered to be categorically eligible under any category.

**ACTION DUE**

This policy is effective for all applications filed on or after October 1, 2010.

## **INQUIRIES**

Please direct policy questions to Rick McClendon at 410-767-7307 and systems questions to Joyce Westbrook at 410-238-1299.

cc: DHR Executive Staff  
FIA Management Staff  
Constituent Services  
DHR Help Desk

# FOOD SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM REPORTING GUIDE

## ✓ When you receive Food Supplement Program benefits:

- You are required to report only when your family's entire gross monthly income is more than the amount listed in the chart for your household size.
- You are not required to report any other changes for your Food Supplement case. (But, if you think a change will increase benefits for your family, you should report it.)
- You should also report an address change so you receive your notices.

## ✓ If you receive Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA), Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA), Medical Assistance (MA), Temporary Disability Assistance Program (TDAP) or Public Assistance to Adults (PAA) you must report all changes within 10 days.

When you report a change for any program, your case manager will make the change for all programs.

- ✓ If your household income goes up, you must see if the total gross monthly income is more than the amount allowed for your household size.
- ✓ Gross income means the amount of earned or unearned income before any deductions, such as taxes or insurance premiums, are taken out.
- ✓ You must report this change no later than 10 days from the end of the month in which your income goes up. Add up the gross income that your household got for the month. Be sure to include both earned and unearned income.
- ✓ Call your case manager if your total income is more than the amounts listed below for your household size.

Household Size	Monthly Income Limit	Biweekly Income Limit	Weekly Income Limit
1	\$1174	\$587	\$293
2	1579	789	394
3	1984	992	496
4	2389	1194	597
5	2794	1397	698
6	3200	1600	800
7	3605	1802	901
8	4010	2005	1002
For more people add \$406		203	101

**Reminder: You must report all changes to your case manager at your scheduled redetermination.**





**To get help with family planning call...**  
**Maryland Local Health Departments**

Allegany County	301-759-5084
Anne Arundel County	410-222-7144
Baltimore City	410-396-0186
Baltimore County	410-887-3740
Calvert County	410-535-5400
Caroline County	410-479-8000
Carroll County	410-876-4930
Cecil County	410-996-5135
Charles County	301-609-6900
Dorchester County	410-228-3294
Frederick County	301-600-1739
Garrett County	301-334-7777
Harford County	410-638-8457
Howard County	410-313-7500
Kent County	410-778-1350
Montgomery County	240-777-4248
Prince George's County	301-883-7859
Queen Anne's County	410-758-0720
St. Mary's County	301-475-4330
Somerset County	443-523-1740
Talbot County	410-819-5600
Washington County	240-313-3200
Wicomico County	410-543-6962
Worcester County	410-957-2005

**Or Contact**

**Planned Parenthood of Maryland at**  
**410-576-1400** [www.plannedparenthoodmd.org](http://www.plannedparenthoodmd.org)

**OR**

**The Center for Maternal and Child Health**  
**410-767-6713** [www.fha.state.md.us/mch](http://www.fha.state.md.us/mch)

# Family Planning

If you think you or your partner are pregnant, start prenatal care as soon as possible. If you need help in finding a provider for birth control or arranging for prenatal care, call:

**1-800-456-8900**

## Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene



STATE OF MARYLAND

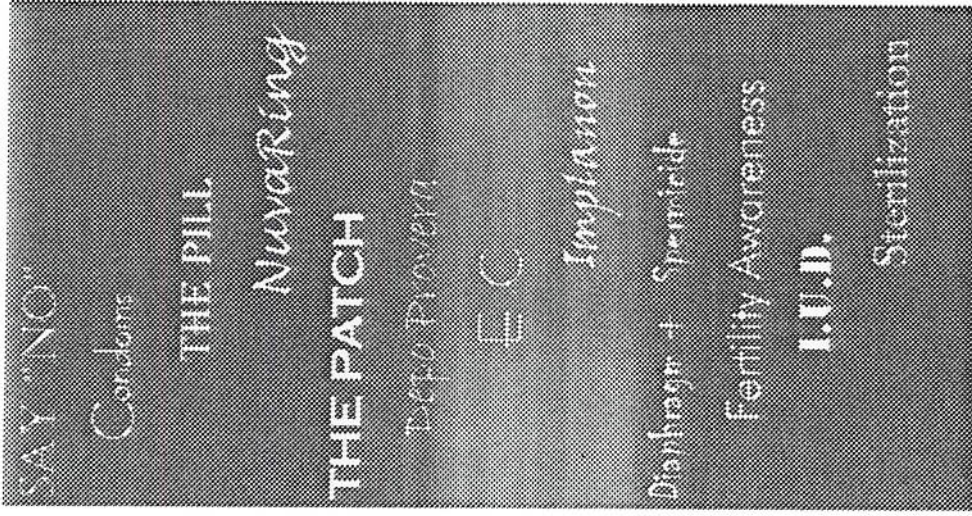
**DHMH**

Martin O'Malley, Governor  
 Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor  
 John M. Colmers, Secretary

The services and facilities of the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) are operated on a non-discriminatory basis. This policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, or national origin and applies to the provisions of employment and granting of advantages, privileges and accommodations.

The Department, in compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act, ensures that qualified individuals with disabilities are given an opportunity to participate in and benefit from DHMH services, programs, benefits, and employment opportunities.

October 2009



# A Guide For You



You can decide if and when to have children. Prepare for and plan your pregnancy. Have a health check up before you become pregnant. Learn the importance of living a healthy life style, so when you are ready to become pregnant, you can have a healthy pregnancy and healthy baby. Taking a B vitamin (folic acid) every day before you become pregnant can help prevent birth defects.

Questions to ask yourself before you become pregnant:

- Am I ready to become a parent?
- Will I be able to finish school?
- Will I have affordable health insurance to cover prenatal care, the delivery, and care for myself and my baby after delivery?
- Will I be able to get or keep a decent job with health care benefits for my child and myself?
- Will I be able to afford a safe and healthy home for my child and myself?
- Do I have people around me that I can turn to if my baby and I need help?

If you have answered "no" to any of the above questions, then now is not the time to become pregnant. There are a number of very safe and easy ways to help you prevent an unplanned pregnancy.

Call your health care provider to get birth control facts and services. If you need information on where to get services, check out the back of this brochure. **Health Choice members:** Check with your MCO, or you may choose to go to a different provider for birth control—you do not need your MCO's approval for this.

Ask your health care provider to help you decide which method is best for you. He or she will talk to you about how to use each method and tell you about the common side effects.

**Abstinence or Saying No to Sexual Intercourse**— 100% effective, the best choice for teenagers.

**Birth Control Pills** - You must take one pill at the same time each day. You will need a prescription to get pills.

**Condom (male and female)** - A condom is placed over a man's penis to keep semen from entering the woman's vagina. A woman can also use a female condom. You can buy condoms without a prescription. Latex and polyurethane condoms help protect you from AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases *if used consistently and correctly*.

**Depo-Provera** - Depo Provera is a hormone injection that works for three months. You must get a shot from your healthcare provider every three months to prevent pregnancy.

**IUD** - The Intrauterine Device must be inserted into a woman's uterus by a doctor or nurse clinician. Depending on the type, the IUD can work for 5 to 10 years.

**Emergency Contraception (EC)** - This method is used within 120 hours of unprotected sex. Talk to your health care provider to see if this is an option for you, or call 1-877-99-GO4EC (1-877-994-6432). You may get EC pills without a prescription if you are 17 or older or by prescription if you are under 17.

**NuvaRing** - The NuvaRing is a thin, flexible vaginal ring that releases hormones. You place it inside the vagina where it stays for three weeks out of the month. You can get the NuvaRing by prescription only.

**The Patch (Ortho Evra)** - Ortho Evra is a matchbook-sized skin patch that releases hormones. You apply a new patch each week for three weeks out of the month. You can get the patch by prescription only.

**Implanon** - Implanon is a flexible, matchstick-sized plastic rod inserted under the skin of a woman's arm by a doctor or nurse clinician. Implanon works for up to 3 years.

**Diaphragm** - A diaphragm is a small, round rubber cup that covers the cervix. You must use spermicide with the diaphragm and use the diaphragm every time you have sex for it to work. You can get a diaphragm by prescription only.

**Fertility Awareness Methods** - These are methods that couples use to avoid or achieve pregnancy based on the timing of intercourse (sex). You must get special training to use these methods.

**Spermicides** - Spermicides (film, foam, jelly, cream) contain Nonoxonyl-9, a chemical that kills sperm. Spermicides are inserted into the woman's vagina before sex. They work best when used with a condom or diaphragm.

**Sterilization** - This method is permanent. Use this method only if you do not want any more children. It is also called "getting your tubes tied" (women) or a vasectomy (men). You can still have sex after sterilization.

**NOTE:** No birth control method is 100% effective against pregnancy, STDs and HIV except abstinence. Each has possible side effects that you should understand before using that method. Ask your healthcare provider for more information.